



## **H. P. Lovecraft's Book of the Supernatural: 20 Classic Tales of the Macabre, Chosen by the Master of Horror Himself**

*Stephen Jones (Editor), Randy Broecker (Illustrator)*

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Written by arguably the most important horror writer of the twentieth century, H. P. Lovecraft's 1927 essay "Supernatural Horror in Literature" traces the evolution of the genre from the early Gothic novels to the work of contemporary American and British authors. Throughout, Lovecraft acknowledges those authors and stories that he feels are the very finest the horror field has to offer: Washington Irving, Edgar Allan Poe, Henry James, Rudyard Kipling, Bram Stoker, Robert Louis Stevenson, Guy de Maupassant, Ambrose Bierce, and Arthur Conan Doyle, each prefaced by Lovecraft's own opinions and insights in their work. This chilling collection also contains Henry James' wonderfully atmospheric short novel *The Turn of the Screw*.

For every fan of modern horror, here is an opportunity to rediscover the origins of the genre with some of most terrifying stories ever imagined.

## **H. P. Lovecraft's Book of the Supernatural: 20 Classic Tales of the Macabre, Chosen by the Master of Horror Himself Details**

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# **From Reader Review H. P. Lovecraft's Book of the Supernatural: 20 Classic Tales of the Macabre, Chosen by the Master of Horror Himself for online ebook**

## **Robert Hudder says**

I read HP Lovecraft's essay on the supernatural in literature a long time ago. I had to do a special request through the university's interlibrary loan. Now, it can be found for a mere seconds hanging out on the GoogleBox. Likewise, some of the source material that he uses is now more readily available.

Still, there is something to be said for having it all in one place and reading it as a history in one go. Some decent stories that would have frightened me when I was younger but seem like tropes now. Probably because many are the prototypes. But it does give me pause. What could be written nowadays that would horrify a modern audience? Barker has written some and some others as well.

They still follow similar ideas in terms of what makes a story scary. But I digress. It was fun to take a dip back into early days.

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## **Jean says**

So I checked this out of my library without realizing that

1. it was **SUPERNATURAL** stories, not **HORROR** stories, and
2. it's not even **BY** Lovecraft, rather it's an anthology of his personal favorites.

The stories themselves are mostly fine (individual ratings to follow) but I was disappointed once I realized that they're by a variety of classical authors, not Lovecraft, who was the one whose work I actually wanted to read.

Also, please note that Lovecraft's commentary before each story had an annoying tendency to spoil major plot points of the story; if these stories are ones you haven't read before, it might be prudent to skip over those.

### **The Tale of the German Student:**

I more-or-less read a version of this in Elementary school, with the whole concept of (view spoiler). Even so, the atmosphere was suitably eerie and it was enjoyable enough. 3/5.

### **Markheim:**

This was meandering and felt kind of pointless. (view spoiler) Might have been better if it was shorter or if the supernatural influences were more tangible to the story. 2/5.

### **Who Knows?:**

Weird, and quite unsettling. It's kind of a fair question as to whether the narrator simply had a psychotic break or if the events of the story actually happened. 3/5.

### **The Invisible Eye:**

I really enjoyed this one, though the blurb beforehand basically spoiled the story. Very atmospheric and creepy, with a satisfying conclusion. 4/5.

### The Torture by Hope:

Oh, this one broke my heart. I think it's more about the evils of humanity than anything else, but it did its job. 4/5.

### Ms. Found in a Bottle:

Didn't really follow this one; the narrator was on a boat that sank (view spoiler). And then we found the letter that he wrote during all that, somehow.

My guess is that the ambiguity was meant to impart a sense of disquiet on the environment, but it didn't work for me, just made me rail against my willing suspension of disbelief. 2/5.

### What Was it?:

ARIEL AND CALIBAN ARE FROM THE TEMPEST, NOT A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM. GOD.  
That said, I'm not sleeping tonight \*shudder\* 4/5.

### The Middle Toe of the Right Foot:

I wish this one was longer. It gave enough details to leave me wondering and not enough to satisfy me. However, I still liked what it did give me. 3/5.

### The Turn of the Screw:

Knowing that (view spoiler) seriously robs this story of much of its punch. Thanks a lot, blurb-by-Lovecraft-before-the-story. 3/5.

### The Dead Smile:

I'm... not sure what to think of this one. The ending (view spoiler) might have been surprising in the early 1900s, but I figured that out almost instantly, as I imagine most modern readers do. So while it was atmospheric, it didn't (in my opinion) build to much, and some of the other supernatural influences (Granny can't die? Who the heck was the woman outside the window with the bloody mouth? Why could the corpse in the casket move around?) felt superfluous and weren't even explained enough to be justifiable in their inclusion. 2/5.

### The Wind in the Rose-Bush:

So even though it was painfully obvious that (view spoiler) this story was still very unsettling. It's not one to read for the "twist" ending, but it's a good read even so. 4/5.

### The Yellow Wallpaper:

I read this for the first time in ninth grade, and while it positively HORRIFIED me at the tender age of fourteen, it's an AWESOME story and I'm not going to lie, as an adult I completely love it. Plus, early feminist undertones! 5/5.

### The Recrudescence of Imray:

I'm not sure I understood the point of this one. It didn't strike me as particularly supernatural, rather it seemed like a semi-racist "othering" story in which the "other" murdered the white man because of his inherent backwardness. I know in the time it was written that's not how it would have been interpreted, but even so, seeing how I'm not reading it for the historical implications considering the context properly, I didn't like it. 2/5.

### The Hands of Karma:

Holy shit this was horrifying. However, the implications also seemed... iffy. Not sure if there was lesbian subtext or just bitchy women sexually assaulting each other beyond the grave out of jealousy, but it was

written by a man and that makes me feel kind of uncomfortable given the subject matter. 3/5.

#### The Burial of the Rats:

This was infinitely more unsettling than anything, and had essentially no supernatural elements whatsoever. Still adequately eerie, though. 3/5.

#### The Red Lodge:

It's a Murder House!! Ugh, this one was creepy. Plus, child peril! 4/5.

#### The Captain of the Pole-Starr:

So here's the problem with horror anthologies: I'm running out of ways to say "this story was unsettling." And this one was, though it wasn't particularly scary. The lost love aspect and the madness associated was compelling, and a nice contrast to the lover waiting at home. 4/5.

#### The Villa Desiree:

... "her little, slant....small, Chinesy eyes." I know this was written a long time ago, but Jesus. Otherwise, I kind of liked this one. Implied sexual assault? Creepy and possibly vague feminism! 3/5 (for racial issues, otherwise would have been 4/5.)

#### The Voice in the Night:

Um. Ew. Fungus?? Gag. I need to go brush my teeth now. At least twice. 3/5.

#### Novel of the White Powder:

Cocaine is a hell of a drug. Or whatever the hell this story was supposed to be about. 2/5.

Average rating:  $(3+2+4+4+2+4+3+3+2+4+5+2+3+3+4+4+3+3+2) = /20 = 3.85$

Final rating: 4

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### **Mark says**

Really wish I could give this a 7/10 but I can't. It's not suppose to be a 'book of horror' so one should not think that before reading it. It's more a 'book of the weird'. There were probably only a couple tales in here that really moved me enough to be "scared". I feel I have to try and put myself in the time period these were written in order to get the full effect but it doesn't often work as I still end up getting bored. Luckily though that didn't happen too often. I had rated each story as I read them and only ended up giving five of the twenty a rating higher than 7/10. The lowest being a 5/10 from the author **Lafcadio Hearn** who spun an odd tale about hands glued to breasts! The best tales were by **Erckmann-Chatrian, Villiers de Adam, Edgar Poe, William Hodgson, and Henry James**. The one by James takes up nearly 1/4 of this book so don't except a short read with that one, but it's worth it. And I should add that when reading the one by Hodgson one can't help but think of the Creepshow episode where Stephen King turns into a green pile of grass before shooting himself. Overall, H.P. Lovecraft shows us that he has good taste in tales of the strange but reading some of these 100 to 200 years later just doesn't float my boat much at this age. H.P. is still better than them all in my opinion!

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## **Skylar Phelps says**

Picking this up, I thought it was a collection of Lovecraft's stories but it's actually a collection of stories that he had named as noteworthy weird fiction or had influenced him in some way.

I was a little disappointed at first because I had started it with the intention to explore more of Lovecraft's work but in the end I was actually quite pleased with the collection. As always, some of the stories are better than others.

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## **Karrie Stewart says**

There is something about old school horror stories that scare the crap out of me. I originally bought this because one of my favorite narrators reads most of the stories, Mr. Steven Crossley. He does an amazing job once again and really brings these stories to life.

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## **i\_hate\_books says**

The stories in this collection which I found to be effective were Guy de Maupassant's "Who Knows", Fitz James O'Brien's "What Was It?", Francis Marion Crawford's "The Dead Smile" and H.R. Wakefield's "The Red Lodge". Do take caution to not read Lovecraft's quotes until afterwards, as they contain spoilers.

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## **Wayne says**

I would not say this is my favorite collection of supernatural tales, but I give them credit for being very good, especially for evidently having been selected by HPL himself as works he appreciated. Compared to Lovecraft's writing, I found most of these very dated in their portrayal of the supernatural, tending toward uneasiness and subtle fear rather than full bore supernatural horror. Despite this, I would recommend these tales to fans of HPL, as one gets to see what he must have enjoyed in literature, and perhaps was even influenced by to some extent. I especially liked The Captain of the Pole-Star by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle as it had more than a bit of Dan Simmons' The Terror about it (or I should say vice versa), though the culmination left me unfulfilled.

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## **Julie Davis says**

What can I say? It was \$6.95 on sale at Audible for Halloween. I'm not made of stone, people!

These stories were chosen from Lovecraft's scholarly essay "Supernatural Horror in Literature" where he discusses a number of authors and works that were influential horror literature. Each is prefaced by a bit of Lovecraft's comments about the work.

There is only one narrator I don't like and, thankfully, she only reads a couple of the stories. There is also not

a bad story. I know most of them, believe it or not, but there is something about listening to an excellent narration that doesn't allow you to skim over anything that really enhances enjoyment of what the author put into it.

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### **Alyssa says**

This was a great overview of horror/supernatural short stories from the nineteenth century. I haven't read much of Lovecraft or his contemporaries, so to someone familiar with his work, this might be a dull collection. Several of the stories have similar concepts -- there are lots of men on ships in cold climates and quite a few dead brides. Oh, and then there was "The Yellow Wallpaper". I have no idea why Lovecraft wrote about Gillman's story in his essay on "weird fiction", but it definitely has my sexism alarm going off. If it wasn't sexism, then I hope someone told Lovecraft that the woman in the wallpaper was a metaphor. And if it was included because Lovecraft was obsessed with fungus (see "A Voice in the Night"), well...not really sure what to say to that.

Favorites: "The Turn of the Screw" by Henry James (of course), "What Was It?" by Fitz-James O'Brien, "Villa Desirée" by May Sinclair, and "The Yellow Wallpaper", even though it shouldn't actually be in this book.

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### **Susan says**

Let me be honest. I wanted to fall in love with this genre that has been around since campfire ghost stories were invented through this book. But I didn't. At first, I thought perhaps it was just a few of the earlier tales, where all the women are considered somewhat hysterical or silly and need to be protected and rescued. I moved through each story, waiting for that jewel that would be the door into the rest of the book and hence the whole field of the horror genre. Yet the stories overall remained predictable, with the main characters going about normal day to day activities until they glimpse something unusual which is chocked up to fatigue, silliness, perhaps insanity, and usually ending in a way that left so many questions unanswered that the story was not very satisfying.

With that said, if you are already in love with this genre, then you should check this collection out. I found Lovecraft's introduction to each story to be the most fascinating part of the book – his reasons for choosing each tale, his own fascination or appreciation of the author. It was definitely worth my time to find out that this genre probably won't be one of my big book loves in life.

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### **Clint says**

This is a nice companion volume to my favorite thing written by H.P. Lovecraft, his essay "Supernatural Horror in Literature", in which he surveys those stories he deems the greatest ancestors to the modern Weird Tale (keeping in mind "modern" at the time was 1925 to 1927).

I have a rough waters relationship with Lovecraft. I enjoy, immensely, his imagination, but care not for his purple prose; however, the man could have had a great career as a critic.

The stories in this volume are a mixed grab bag. You get some Henry James, Rudyard Kipling, Arthur Machen, Edgar Allan Poe amongst others. My favorite, and one of my all time greatest hits in short stories, is “The Yellow Wallpaper” by Charlotte Perkins Gilman.

Discoveries I made:

- I need to hunt down the supernatural tales of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Included is the story “The Captain of the Pole-Star”.
- I need to read more Rudyard Kipling
- I need to re-read The Three Imposters by Arthur Machen
- William Hope Hodgson is remarkable
- I’m keen to read more Lafcadio Hearn

As to this collection, there are some gems, but overall the quality was too rocky to warrant more than 4 stars. One star marked off because Lovecraft’s introductions, while engaging, are full of spoilers. Read them AFTER each story.

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### **Brianna says**

The title is aptly “Book of the Supernatural” rather than “Book of the Horrific.” While H. P. is known for Horror, that is not what he has collected here.

What I loved about this book was H. P.’s notes on craft and on both the theory behind the genre of “weird fiction” and on the craft of it. The collection is also made more interesting by it’s variety ranging from supernatural and emotive to horror.

“The Tale of the German Student” by Washington Irving

I do not think she was a woman. She was France, or she was his ideology/world, or, less interestingly, merely his created woman. Anyway, it was a remarkably simply put story.

“Markheim” by Robert Louis Stevenson

The craft and shaping of tone in this story is both clear and effective. From the arrival of Markheim’s visitor on it gets a bit pedantic and predictable.

“Who Knows?” by Guy de Maupassant

~lol~ Best use of the word “waddling.”

“The Invisible Eye” by Erckmann-Chatrian

A trickster’s tale set in a gothic landscape.

“The Torture by Hope” by Villiers se l’Isle Adam

A dark scene from the inquisition.

“Ms. Found in a Bottle” by Edgar Allan Poe

Poe has at it again sustaining tone and mood long enough to produce the desired effect and knowing when to end.

“What was it?” by Fitz James O’Brien

A lot better than the title sounds. Uses the terror of unknown and of unknowable.

“The Middle Toe of the Right Foot” by Ambrose Bierce

Ok. Sorry Ambrose, but I saw this one a mile away. Kind of liked the urban legend feel for a moment there though.

“The Turn of the Screw” by Henry James

5 stars. Like Jane Eyre meets “The Old Nurse’s Story” meets “Do I even believe this narrator?”

“The Dead Smile” by F. Marion Crawford

Wonderful interaction with folk legend and the unexplained (especially in part 2).

“The Wind in the Rose-Bush” by Marry E. Wilkins-Freeman

A lovely tale built on the prolonged tension of ambiguity.

“The Yellow Wallpaper” by Charlotte Perkins Gilman

This wonderful piece is strange in a collection labeled supernatural. However, this interestingly illuminates Lovecraft’s understanding of what constituted weird fiction. As for the story itself, all the stars.

“The Recrudscence of Imray” by Rudyard Kipling

Well. Kipling is made out of Kipling as much as ever before. He’s brilliant and his language and craft are beautiful. Racist and imperialist underpinnings are still unavoidable.

“The Hands of Karma (Ingw-Banashi)” by Lafcadio Hearn

Lol. H.P.’s description. But anyway, to the story itself. Well. It is indeed weird. I’d like to read more Hearn before passing judgment.

“The Burial of the Rats” by Bram Stoker

The dramatic horror was a thing, I guess, but it didn’t really go anywhere.

“The Red Lodge” by H. R. Wakefield

A pretty straightforward ghost story.

“The Captain of the Pole-Star” by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Eh, this was not my favorite Conan Doyle.

“The Villa Désirée” by May Sinclair

I loved the inclusion of this piece which is an exploration not so much of supernatural beings as in the supernatural reality.

“The Voice in the Night” by William Hope Hodgson

One of the better-executed sailor stories I have experienced.

“Novel of the White Powder” by Arthur Machen

A fun story that, despite having some clear leading events also maintains mystery that draws the reader on.

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## SR says

### STORY TIME!

Today, August 11th 2016, I left my apartment at a bit after noon to go to the laundry room in my building's basement. Time to switch clothes from washer to dryer, and collect the stuff that needed to air-dry. I was the only person home and it was a short errand, so I left the door to the unit unlocked. The spring bolt lock on our unit's door has become increasingly finicky in the two years we've lived in this apartment; keys turn the lock to a certain position, immediately before tripping the springs that withdraw the bolts, and there they stick. They complete the full rotation necessary only with some amount of effort, overcoming the stiffness of the lock; the trick is to wait for the SECOND click, because the first won't open the door.

We've become wary of it, and before I headed downstairs I poked at the lock (I like locks!) and ensured that the knob on the inside of the door was oriented in the way that shows it is farthest from activating the springs. I closed the door behind me (we have cats) and tripped off downstairs.

When I came back up the stairs, carrying my delicates, the door was locked.

Like, really freaking locked.

Maybe one of my roomies had come home from work early; I knocked. Maybe they were in the bathroom? I knocked again. Maybe taking a shower, since it's so absolutely disgusting outside (today was close to 100 Fahrenheit, with humidity in the 70% range; I'm in New England, where air conditioning is a capricious and unreliable thing). I waited and knocked again. And again. Then realized that standing outside my apartment door with a handful of damp special-care clothes, including lingerie, was stupid. I went back to the basement and chucked the delicates in with the rest - one turn in the dryer on its lowest heat setting wouldn't hurt them. I came back upstairs and knocked.

One of the cats meowed plaintively. That was the only response.

To the lobby! If a housemate WAS home, and was just plugged into headphones or some other thing, I could buzz them on the intercom and they could let me in. No big deal.

The intercom went without answer.

I spent twenty minutes contemplating my options, back up on the third floor. (Yeah, so I'd already done a dozen flights of stairs.) It seemed likely that one of my housemates had had a morning appointment, come home, grabbed their stuff for work, and left, locking the door behind them, not realizing (and how could they) that I was elsewhere in the building without my keys. Maybe it was the other way around - they had worked in the morning, come back to dump their stuff, then gone out again for an appointment or errand or something. They might be coming back right now!

They did not come back right then.

In the era of social media and the slow death of actual phone conversations, it isn't atypical for one to have nine ways of contacting another person without having the faintest clue what their phone number is. I have about seven phone numbers memorized: my own, my parents' landline, my mother's cell phone, two medical facilities' automated prescription refill/medication ordering lines, possibly my psychiatrist's, and, atavistically, the landline for the house I lived in for the first eleven years of my life. My housemates' cell numbers are conspicuously absent from this list.

There had been a flyer in the lobby a couple weeks ago saying that the fee associated with calling management to deal with lock-outs had been increased as a deterrent. It wasn't exorbitant, but with my budget it was not inconsiderable. So basically, I had to determine whether being able to access my home at that moment, or within the hour, was worth the fee, while remembering that my housemates *could* return at any point and render the issue moot.

When I'd left the apartment, I had carried the clothes I was wearing, eight quarters, and a dryer sheet. I hadn't bothered to put on shoes, even flip-flops. As I said, I hadn't brought my keys. My cell phone was on my desk inside the apartment. My wallet was in my day-to-day bag, hung up on a hook inside the apartment. Even more crucially, *air conditioning* was inside the apartment.

Okay. Worth the fee.

*However*, the building's management company has a placard in the lobby with their phone number.

So if I could find a phone, I could call management! My difficulty would last precisely as long as it took to find someone - a building resident, with any luck, because the lock on the building itself presented significant limitations on my mobility - willing to lend me their phone.

Enter Wally.

Wally lives in the unit across the hall from us. It isn't a social building; I recognize a few other residents by sight but know none of their names, and I'd never spoken to neighbors. Desperate times, though - so when this guy, total stranger, came out onto the landing, I got over my social anxiety precisely long enough to say "Hey. Do you think I could borrow your phone?"

He was at a loss, and I gave a synopsis: locked out of the unit, wanted to call management, phone is on the other side of a locked door, what crappy luck. He made sympathetic noises and unlocked his iPhone before handing it over. He was going to go to the store, back in ten or fifteen minutes, and in case his wife called he asked that I tell her he'd be available shortly. Yup, okay, got it, and I followed him down the stairs to check the management company's phone number and dialed.

I mentioned social anxiety. Add phones and it's nearly paralyzing. But again, desperate times - so I hung on until someone picked up and said something I could barely hear. It was quieter upstairs, so back up I went, and the representative took my name and address and did some database-y work. I was treated to four minutes of hold music before an entirely different voice picked up and I gave the name and address and unit number again.

Wait, though, I was locked out of my unit? Not the building? The managers weren't the people to call, in that case; I should get in touch with my landlord for spare keys.

My landlord lives in Ireland.

I thanked the management company rep and hung up. A few minutes later, my neighbor came back from his errand and asked if I'd had any luck. Nope. None. Did I have friends in the area? No, I'm in a weird suburb that's pretty isolated. Did I have a locksmith's number? Nope. Did I - no, I was barefoot.

That part seemed the most disheartening to him, that I did not even have shoes.

I thanked him for letting me borrow his phone, despite it having yielded nothing, and started contemplating an afternoon spent on the landing floor. He commiserated with me for a bit, before saying that he was planning on being home all day and that if I thought of anything he could do, just knock and let him know.

An hour had passed. I trudged back down to the laundry room, thought about dragging the clean clothes up the stairs, and then decided they'd get to stay in purgatory.

Half an hour or so passed. I spent the time thinking of other afternoons I have had that were definitively, cut-and-dry, *far* worse than a few hours of sitting on a landing. I could totally deal with this. It'd be another three or four hours until my housemates got back from work, but what's three or four hours?

It's a lot.

Out of boredom, I went back down to the laundry room (which doubles as the boiler room and general storage, and tends to average a temperature of about 120 degrees), folded all my clothes, and carted them back upstairs. I set them on the floor. I now had no way to pass the time.

The door across the hall opened, and my neighbor stuck his head out. Still no luck? Nope, nothing. Oh well. Stuck until the housemates come back? Yeah, seemed like. Did I need anything? Not that I could really think of. Did I *want* anything? Water? Fresca? It's a freaking heat wave, after all. I said that water would be *great*. Did I want a book, maybe?

Book. Book and water and time to read. That would improve my situation immeasurably. I accepted the offer with great thanks and he started squirreling through piles of grad-school stuff, before surfacing with three doorstop paperbacks: a best-of-sci-fi anthology, an epic gritty postapocalyptic something, and - finally, the point of this stupid review, this book. Lovecraft's Book of the Supernatural.

While I was chief extortionist (treasurer) for the Campus Crusade for Cthulhu in undergrad, I have never actually read any Lovecraft fiction, mainly because he was a white supremacist POS. However, I don't trust the editor of that line of sci-fi anthologies, and a novel didn't seem like a good idea for a wait of indefinite duration. I'll take the Lovecraft, I said, and he passed it to me. He noted that if I got hungry, I should knock on his door - he'd be more than happy to microwave me something or whatever. I thanked him profusely for the water, the book, and the offer, and on my way out introduced myself. By the way, right, people have names, here is mine. He said no problem, none, and said his name was Wally.

Which is how I got around to reading about 300 pages of pre-1930s "weird tales," peppered with rather overly critical snippets from Lovecraft's essay "Supernatural Horror in Literature," while sitting on a third-floor landing of a crappy post-WWII apartment block next to a pile of clean laundry during a freaking colossal heat wave.

Then my housemate came home from work and I was saved, shortly after I'd finished a reread of The Yellow Wallpaper and Other Stories, which was included in the anthology. I deposited book and borrowed glass with Wally and immediately took to whining on the Internet. AS YOU DO.

SO ANYWAY LET ME TALK ABOUT THE ACTUAL BOOK: Being conversant with the Cthulhu mythos and reading modern weird fiction was not in any way predictive of how much I enjoyed the stories that Lovecraft himself had considered to be either formative or emblematic of the horror genre. I found the collection very hit-or-miss. The Irving story was almost laughable; Poe's was intriguing but forgettable (it seemed rootless); F. Marion Crawford's ACTUALLY laughable. Standouts were "The Wind in the Rose-Bush," "The Invisible Eye," "The Middle Toe of the Right Foot," and "What Was It?" I skipped The Turn of the Screw because I've read it within the past couple years. My housemate intervened just after I'd finished the Kipling, whereupon I returned the book, and I don't know if I'll pick it up again.

Lovecraft's essay struck me as pompous blithering inflated to mask his unmaskable xenophobia. The snippets introducing each story were sometimes enlightening (I knew barely anything about Ambrose Bierce, for instance), but usually petty little stabs at the author or the people the author is imitating (or their imitators). It's a bit much for Lovecraft to say that an author is overly dependent on imagery, for example.

The stories themselves tended toward either dread of the other (AKA racism) or fear of divine justice, but the standouts veered off from those themes. "The Torture of Hope," for example, was almost Borges-like in its simplicity (although not in its rampant antisemitism). I'm glad to have had the introduction to Bierce, de Maupassant, Wilkins-Freeman, and Erckmann-Chatrian.

I'm also just really, really glad my neighbor is the kind of nerd who recognizes that books can turn a day around.

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### **Marie says**

#### **Very Cool Stories**

This was a great book of different stories from some of the classic masters of horror which paved the way for most of the horror we have today. Four star read for keeping me entertained.

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### **Tulpa says**

The high points were the William Hope Hodgson story and the Fitz James O'Brien story, I didn't expect this and they perhaps singularly elevate this collection to 4 stars. Nothing in here was so terrible I couldn't believe it, though one of the stories was absurdly anti-semitic and it is well worth skipping that one. I can't recall the title already, but you'll know it when you start to read it.

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